HINDU-MUSLIM PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTION

BY

HIS HOLINESS HAZRAT

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FOREWORD

The problems of intercommunal relations and communal representation have become subjects of all absorbing interest to the educated section of our countrymen. Various solutions have been put forward by leaders representing different shades of thought from among different communities. No real well-wisher of the country can regard but with most anxious misgivings the lengthening shadow of communal feuds and bitterness of feeling that is overspreading the land. The present Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad recently addressed a letter to H. E. the Viceroy expressing his own views on the burning questions of the day. This is now published in the form of a booklet. His reflections on the present political situation, his diagnosis of the disease in the body politic of India, and the remedies suggested for its cure, are, in the opinion of the publishers, well worth a perusal. It is hoped that any one having the welfare of the country at heart will find much food for thought, while going through the pages of this small brochure which is presented to the public with the sincere good wishes of the Ahmadiyya Community.

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I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the accursed.
In the name of Allah the Beneficent the Merciful
With His Grace and Mercy.
He alone is the Helper.

May it please Your Excellency,

The present state of affairs in India which is the outcome of the great tension existing between the different communities inhabiting the country is a source of great anxiety for every true well-wisher of India. Your Excellency, who is responsible to the King-Emperor for the maintenance of peace and order in India must naturally feel most concerned at the highly-strained relations existing between the Hindus and the Muslims at the present time.

I had a mind to express my views concerning this matter in the address which is to be presented to Your Excellency by a deputation of the Ahmadiyya Community which you have kindly consented to receive in this November, but the speech which Your Excellency made in the Chelmsford Club has prompted me to submit my views immediately without waiting for that occasion. I was yet thinking over this matter when I received from the Deputy-Commissioner, Gurdaspur a copy of Your Excellency's speech as well as a copy of the letter sent by the Punjab Government to the Deputy Commissioners of the various districts along with the former which left no doubt as to the fact that the Government of India is now determined to find out a solution of this grave problem of the day, and that therefore I should submit my views immediately.

As Representative of His Majesty in India Your Excellency must naturally feel most anxious to remove this tension and establish peace and goodwill between the different sections of His Majesty's Indian subjects, but I assure Your Excellency that I am also very deeply affected to behold this state of affairs in India; and as may be learnt from the records of the times of your predecessors as well as from the speeches of the Governors of the Provinces, I have always done my best for the maintenance of peace in the country. The efforts made by me for the establishment of peace as well as the efforts made by the members of the Ahmadiyya Community under my guidance, may be known from the opinion expressed by Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Sir Malcolm Hailey who, as heads of the province which contains the headquarters of the Ahmadiyya Movement, are best entitled to form a correct opinion concerning the views and activities of the Ahmadiyya Section of the Muslims of India. The press communique issued by the Government of Sir Michael O'Dwyer ran as follows:—

"The Punjab Government has received a report on the activities of the Ahmadiyya Community of Qadian in repressing disturbances and in keeping apart from all participation in any of the unlawful agitations which have disfigured the Punjab. The Community has been exhorting all their followers to have nothing to do with the movement, and their efforts are reported to have been entirely successful."

On April 15th, 1919, Sir Michael O'Dwyer directed his private Secretary to address the following words to one of my secretaries:—

"During the 6 years' term of his office, the Community under the guidance of its respected Head has throughout shown itself thoroughly loyal to the Government and eager to promote the welfare and progress of the country. His Honour has pleasure in acknowledging the valuable opinions received from the Community in many important questions bearing on these matters, and their active assistance in connection with the prosecution of war and the maintenance of internal peace, and shall be glad to bring them to the notice of its successor who, he is sure, can rely on receiving from the Community and its respected Head the same Co-operation and support."

His Excellency Sir Malcolm Hailey, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S.,

Governor of the Punjab, expressed the following opinion in his reply to the address of welcome presented by the Ahmadiyya Community :—

"But though I cannot with propriety speak of the theological side of your movement, there is one aspect on which I am entitled to dwell. Like my predecessor, Sir Edward Maclagan, I welcome the attitude you have adopted in political matters. You have, as a Community, shown yourself to be disciples of the doctrine that political improvement should be effected by reason and conviction, not by violent agitation or mass movement. You have as a body, shown by your attitude in the Great War, and in our trouble with Afganistan in 1919, that you were prepared to make sacrifices in a just cause ; you have given hearty and practical support to the Territorial Movement. It would be out of place if I did not pay my tribute to your making an effort in reason in politics, and working for the stability of society."

My followers and myself have made all sorts of sacrifices in the cause of peace, and will, God helping us, continue to do so in the future. We have suffered persecutions, but have never failed in the performance of our duties.

Your Excellency will remember that one member of the Ahmadiyya Community was put to death by the orders of the Amir Abdur Rahman Khan of Kabul, another prominent Ahmady was executed by the late Amir Habib Ullah Khan, and recently three of our brethren were brutally stoned to death by the present ruler, on the ground that they preached against Jehad, *i.e.,* making war on the score of religious differences. Most people erroneously think that the execution of these five Ahmadies was due to their adherence to the scholastic doctrine of the Ahmadiyya Movement, while, as the better informed people know, the truth is that these executions were due to the fact that in accordance with the peaceful teachings of the founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement these Ahmadies preached peace and hated the idea of making war on the ground of religious differences. Mr. Martin, an Englishman, who served under the late Amir Habib Ullah Khan as Chief Engineer, writes in his book, "Under the Absolute Amir," saying that Sahibzada Abdul Latif Khan, an eminent Ahmadi of Khost, was stoned to death by the Amir on the ground that in accordance with the teachings of the Ahmadiyya Movement he preached against Jehad, which

was most likely to disarm the Amir of the weapon used by him in exciting his subjects against the British and Russian Governments. The testimony of this impartial English writer is sufficient to prove that the cause of the execution of our brethren, of whom three were stoned to death in my own time, *i.e.*, in 1924 and 1925, is our teaching against Jehad which certain Islamic governments are supporting in order to further their own interests, erroneously believing it to be a part of the Islamic teachings. When I was coming back from England, in 1924, the Ahmadies of Egypt convened a meeting at Alexandria in order to decide about making arrangements for my reception, whereupon people accusing them of being agents of the British attacked them unaware and killed one innocent member of the party, causing great damage to the property of certain others. In short, we, the members of the Ahmadiyya Community, have always been doing our best for the establishment of peace both in India and elsewhere, and have never hesitated to sacrifice our lives, property, and honour for the establishment of peace, and therefore our voice in this matter carries much more weight than that of any other community. And I think it was due to nothing but my sincere desire for peace that God the All-knowing made clear to me about seven years ago the conditions now prevailing in the country. When Non-Co-operation was being loudly preached everywhere in India I delivered a speech in the Bradlaugh Hall, Lahore, stating therein that real peace could not be established in India unless the Indians adopted the following two methods: Firstly, instead of preaching that there were no differences between the different peoples of India and that the Indians formed one homogeneous nation, they should admit the presence of differences and then proceed to remove the causes thereof; otherwise the result will be that the masses who in their state of excitement were forgetting their differences would soon after again recall them and would begin to fight over them more than ever.

Secondly, they should include in all their understandings and agreements the Government as well as the Anglo-Indians, because, no matter whether the coming of the Englishman into India was rightful or not, it is a fact that they now form a part of the inhabitants of the country, and consequently complete peace could not be established without their co-operation.

But I am sorry to say that this honest and sympathetic suggestion was disregarded at that time, with the result that India suffered most heavily during the succeeding years. I am glad to know, however, that conditions are now changing and even an extremist like Lala Lajpat Rai has been forced to declare his concurrence with my views. Similarly, in 1923, in spite of the fact that I was very heavily pressed on account of my other duties in connection with the administration of the Movement of which I am the present Leader, I had an interview with Sir Edward Maclagan at Lahore in which I drew his attention to the highly disturbed state of the country and, on his expressing a desire, I submitted to him in writing certain suggestions for his consideration, and though he considered the matter in the Council, I am sorry to say that due attention was not paid to it, and the scheme was practically allowed to drop. I had proposed that the Government should convene an All-India Unity Conference and invite the representatives of all the communities and classes. My words were the following :—

"Two communities inhabiting one and the same country can not remain at war for ever. If the Government do not soon discharge their duty in this matter the Congress or other political leaders will turn their attention towards it and will eventually succeed, even if they remain unsuccessful in the the beginning, which will produce a general impression in the country to the effect that the real well-wisher of India is the Congress and not the Government.

"Consequently, in accordance with true political foresight, the Government should themselves act as the peacemaker and should thus prove to the people that real union can only be brought about through the Government, and that the Government do not like these communal disturbances. In my opinion this is a golden opportunity for strengthening the Government in India at the present time."

I also drew the attention of the Governor to the fact that it being an All-India question, the Government of India were sure to take up the matter if the Punjab Government cared to bring it to the notice of the Central Government. I went a step further and expressed my readiness to place the services of my Community at the disposal of the Government for the purpose of ascertaining the views of the leading Hindus and

Muslims and the settlement of other preliminary matters. But I am sorry to say that His Excellency the Governor expressed the opinion that such a conference could not be a success, while the truth is that from the Government point of view the mere convening of such a conference, irrespective of the fact whether it became a success or a failure, was most essential because it was certain to dissipate the misgivings of the people concerning the Government and very likely to prove a means of drawing the people to its side. It is now apparent from Your Excellency's speech that the danger which I predicted has now actually happened and there has grown up among the Indians a class of men who hold the Government responsible for all these disturbances, or at least accuse the Government for lack of proper attention in the matter. If my proposal had at that time been given serious attention, and if the then Viceroy of India had declared, as Your Excellency has now done, that the Government are now prepared to call a conference of all parties, no matter whether it succeeds in its purpose or not, provided circumstances were favourable for such a conference, there would not have arisen any misgivings in the minds of the people. As I had written, leaders did pay attention to this matter, and though they failed to achieve their object because they disregarded the presence of the Government and the Anglo-Indians, yet they certainly succeeded in creating a general impression in the country to the effect that the Congress and other political leaders are most thoughtful of the people of India and more anxious to improve the state of the country than the Government, and this impression is decidedly harmful to the Government. The feelings of pleasure and satisfaction which Your Excellency's speech has produced in all quarters of the country, and even among the enemies of the Government, clearly proves that the country was restlessly waiting to hear this voice from the Government. I only wish that this announcement had been made a few years back, so that the Government and the country would have been spared those grave difficulties which have of late confronted them.

Although matters have now become greatly complicated in India and the establishment of peace apparently seems to be almost impossible, yet no wise man can think that the present state of affairs is incurable. Only a few years ago the idea that

the Hindus and Mussalmans were brethren was so universally held and preached in India that no one thought that it was going to prove only a temporary feeling. I remember that in 1917, when the late Mr. Montague visited India I had an interview with him as well as with Lord Chelmsford. Lord Chelmsford asked me whether the union between the Hindus and Mohammedans was going to be permanent, to which I gave the reply that this union could only last if the causes of disunion be removed, otherwise after a few years peace would again be disturbed and Hindus and Muslims would begin to quarrel. The existing state of affairs proves the truth of my statement. All this indicates that the present disturbances can also not last long, like the peace of the previous years, and unless the real causes of disunion be discovered and judiciously treated; alternate periods of peace and disturbance will continue to come over the country and be a most stubborn hindrance in the way of the progress of India. The harm done by these communal disturbances is apparent, but even the intervening periods of peace and union are proving harmful because this peace is not based on any solid ground; and as the causes of disunion continue to exist, the real cure and true reformation is being postponed from day to day.

So far as I think, this communal tension and the disturbances which result from it are due to certain moral weaknesses which, owing to the fact that the Indians are not accustomed to the national or representative form of Government, have become firmly rooted in them. Your Excellency must be aware that India has never had for any length of time national or representative government. India was never one country so far as the government of the country was concerned. Union between different communities and classes results from unity of ideas or from unity of customs or from the people working together for a length of time, and unfortunately, Indians have never been influenced by any of these causes. The views of the different peoples of India are different, their customs are different, and they have never cultivated the habit of co-operation and working together.

For thousands of years India had been divided into a number of independent States. In the time of the Mughals, India came under one Government for a period, but the system

of government was not at that time so advanced as to produce feelings of nationalism. There was little co-operation between the different provinces, and inter-relations were very limited. National feelings have come into existence only in the period of the British rule, but the movement is so recent that millions of men have not as yet been impressed with it, and even those who think that they have imbibed the spirit of nationalism are very superficial in their feelings, and their views are as yet very imperfect. Under the circumstances it is most unreasonable to think that only a few sermons and occasional words of advice will produce the desired effect. The hope of a complete union in the near future is quite unwarrantable. Feelings of nationalism will take time to spread, and they will take a still longer period in taking root and becoming fully developed in the country. The appeals of leaders exhorting the people to become united can do very little unless the masses begin to understand the causes of dis-union and through a long process of training cultivate in themselves feelings of nationalism and unity. The old ideas should gradually give room to the new ones. We cannot ignore the nature of man. The hindrances which come in the way of an individual's progress become all the more prominent and troublesome when communities are concerned. When we daily see that in matters of habit individuals can not effect a revolutionary reformation in themselves in spite of their great desire and firm determination to do so, and require a long period of continuous effort, how can we expect to change the condition of an entire country merely through a few lectures of certain leaders or even by merely creating a desire for betterment in the whole country. If reformation could be effected and habits changed through mere desires, the whole world would in one day become a place of angels. I do not mean that reformation is impossible, but I only mean to say that the disease has become chronic and dangerous, and therefore the remedy needs much greater attention. As a matter of fact, this disease has not come into existence through the action of the leaders, nor can it be remedied merely through their words of advice. It is necessary that we should discover the real cause of it and then, like an able and experienced physician, provide the needed cure; and during the period of treatment should, like a careful doctor, do

our best to keep down the symptoms as much as possible so that the symptoms may not themselves become a disease and cause the death of the patient before the real disease be cured.

After these introductory remarks I beg leave to submit my views concerning the defects which have resulted from the Indians not being accustomed to national government. India, as I have said, has always been inhabited by peoples of different views and different origins, and as a result of this the ruler of country who belonged to a particular community was not looked upon as a national king but only as a communal sovereign, and as he was always dependent on the support of the community to which he belonged, he was always particularly thoughtful of the welfare of his own community. When the government passed into the hands of any other community the succeeding community regarded it as their turn of profiting from the Government of the country, and therefore all the benefits went to that particular community. This tribal government which lasted in India for thousands of years resulted in the following two ideas being firmly planted in the minds of the Indian people: firstly, that all the good that lies in one's power should be done only to the particular community to which one belongs; and secondly, that all the possible harm should be done to the other communities, so that they may not become powerful and retaliate upon their oppressors. It is true that this kind of treatment is meted out to others by all the various peoples of the world in international relations, but in India even the people inhabiting the different parts of the same country display these feelings, and this appears strange in the eyes of the world.

The other defect is that for thousands of years India has never had the experience of the representative form of government. In fact, the idea of representative government has never occurred to the minds of the Indians; and as those people who do not possess representative form of government are generally backward in their ideas of toleration, the Indians have never been able to cultivate this habit. Despotic Governments cannot permit public criticism. As a matter of fact, criticism is always the forerunner of change; but where the law does not permit of any change in the existing form of government, owing to its despotic character, criticism

cannot but result in rebellion. Hence all despotic Governments prohibit criticism; and, moreover, as in such Governments the opinion of the people is rarely asked in matters of administration, the spirit of right criticism dies out in the country, with the result that neither the Government nor the people can tolerate it. Under these circumstances, people resort to criticism only when they mean to rise in revolt against the existing Government, the result being that gradually those who criticise form the idea that the object of criticism is to destroy others, and similarly those who are criticised begin to think that criticism aims at their destruction. Most people, therefore, acquire the habit of criticising with evil intention as well as that of ascribing the criticism of others to bad intention, and hence they always reply to the criticism of others in a very strong and highly inflammatory language. All these defects are nowadays found among the Indians because India has always been the seat of despotic government. People cannot tolerate the slightest criticism, whether it is in religion, politics, or in matters of social relations. They have forgotten the right method of criticism and, leaving aside the real point, generally begin to make personal attacks against their antagonists. Similarly, they do not attribute the criticism of others to good intentions but invariably think that the others attack them with an evil intention, and consequently they themselves begin to attack others in return and do not care to have any regard for their feelings.

The above-mentioned facts which have become established in the country have all the more been aggravated through religious and social differences. Hence it is that the causes of disturbances manifest themselves in three ways: firstly in matters of religion, secondly in social relations, and thirdly in political dealings. If there had been no religious differences between the different peoples of India, my opinion would have been that in order to cure the disease from which India is suffering, it should be granted independent government, so that the people may reform these defects through quarreling with one another; because, so far as I think, the remedy of India's ailment lies not only in the spread of education and the extension of railways and roads but also in the Indians being given the opportunity of practical experience in the work

of administration. But the difficulty is that in India the religious differences have assumed a most dangerous aspect and the gulf dividing one community from another is very wide. Everything can be sacrificed for the attainment of unity and peace, but no honest man can for a moment think of sacrificing his religion. It is certain that till the time when, through fighting with one another, the Indians cultivate the spirit of toleration, one religion will have rooted out the other, and no one who believes in religion as a truth from God can ever agree to undergo such an experiment.

Your Excellency has, in your speech, made an appeal to the people of India, saying: "India has assimilated numberless different peoples in past ages; will it fail in this last trial?" I think there is a vast difference between the past occasions and the present one. History shows that the peoples who came to India before the Muslims were of two kinds, firstly, those whose civilization was much inferior to that of the Indian people, and secondly those whose culture was not so low but whose number was very small, for instance the Greeks and the Persians. India adopted only one way to absorb them, *viz.*, that of social pressure. Those people who had no fixed moral code of their own succumbed to that pressure after some time and were absorbed among the Indian people. Another factor which contributed to this result was the fact that they found the civilization of the Indian people to be much superior to theirs. Hence these people, seeing this superiority and being unable to resist the social pressure were content to accept the position of "Sudras." Those who possessed a higher standard of civilization came to India in very small numbers. Moreover, they were polytheists like the Indian tribes, and were utter strangers to the conception of Divine unity. Hence, when their connection with the mother country was cut off, they relinquished their own habits and customs and were assimilated with the Hindus. Some of them, having fought bravely against the Buddhists, were admitted into Hindu society as Rajputs, under the Agnikund rite, as a reward of their good services, and the rest as Vaishas and Sudras. But now the circumstances are quite different. In the present case it is the question of the Muslims and Christians. Both these communities have independent civilizations of their own and

they follow religions which claim to have a mission for the whole world. Hence it is impossible to assimilate these two peoples in the way in which the previous people had been assimilated. The principles of union in India with regard to religions was that both the parties accepted each other's gods; and as regards social relations, if the newcomers could not succeed in securing more favourable terms, they had to accept the status of Sudras.

The Muslims and the Christians can do neither of the two things. The central point of their religions is their belief in the existence of God, and they can make no such compromise in which they may have to alter their belief with regard to the Supreme Being. Nor do their well-established civilizations permit them to degrade themselves to the low position of the Sudras. Hence, if it is possible to bring about unity between the different communities of India, it can be effected only when all the parties agree to recognise the fact that all communities have a right to differ from one another in their religion and social observances, and that in spite of those differences they have the same civic rights. Unless all the communities agree to this principle, peace is impossible, but the habits of the people of which I have spoken above are great hindrance in the way of the attainment of this object. If the disagreement had pertained only to certain matters of principle and had not been based on the dispositions and morals of the people, peace might have been brought about by a settlement of principles. But the real cause lies in the fact that the dispositions and morals of men have now been moulded in a special mould, with the result that local and accidental disputes assume the form of communal quarrels. Ideas that have been silently taking root in the minds of the people make men see in every dispute the sign of a communal war. The whole country becomes excited from one end to the other, and an ordinary affair becomes a communal question. At the root of all this trouble is the spirit of a long-standing intolerance which has been engendered owing to the absence of national spirit and ignorance of the principles of Representative Government.

I have already expressed the opinion that the natural remedy for this disease lies in the dissemination of education, the provision of facilities for an increased mutual intercourse,

and the introduction of complete representative government in India. But I have also pointed out that the present conditions in India do not allow of the immediate establishment of self-government; it is necessary that it should be introduced gradually. Such is the present condition in India that even the first step to that goal under the limited reforms scheme has resulted in serious tension between the two communities. The Hindu community, in order to attain political supremacy, discarded the teachings of their fathers with regard to untouchability and "Shudhi," and are striving to swell their ranks by adding to their numbers the depressed classes; while on the other hand the Muslims are thinking of strengthening their position by seeking help from their outside co-religionists. The ideas of "Shudhi" and of uplifting the depressed classes are not evil in themselves. The former is the right of every community, and the latter is a great service to humanity. But the connection of both these movements with the fight for greater representation has given them a ghastly appearance, and has startled the other communities, for they look upon them not as religious or social movements, but as devices for attaining political supremacy, and the history of both these movements goes far to show that the apprehensions of the other communities are not baseless.

The Muslims are confronted by another difficulty also, which is exciting their feelings in an extraordinary way. The difficulty lies in the fact that the political views of the British people run counter to the communal needs of the Muslims of India. The existence of the Muslims as a community under the present circumstances depends upon separate representation, but such has been the training of the British people that they come to look upon it as the bane of national advancement. The British people have failed to realise that there is a difference between a sick person's diet and that of a healthy man. The mere fact that a certain diet is wholesome does not mean that it can be safely given to each and every person. Even foods of the best kind which are useful for 99 per cent. of men may cause the death of one per cent. The statesmen and journalists of Great Britain being unable to understand the disease of the Indian people, are generally of the opinion that separate representation is an error which must be rectified as soon as

possible. Hence the agitation of the Hindu community against communal representation is ascribed by them to their national spirit, and they ignore the fact that the Hindus being in the majority mixed electorate must prove to be of immense advantage to them. As this view is often expressed both in the Press and on the platform, the Muslims are always labouring under the apprehension that the right of separate representation will speedily be withdrawn, and consequently they are liable to be excited even at the slightest provocation.

Since, as I have pointed out, the real remedy cannot be applied at once, and as on Great Britain devolves the heavy responsibility that it should not hand over the reins of government to the Indians until the position of the minorities is secure, therefore, while gradually educating the Indian people in discharging their responsibilities with fairness and equity, steps should also be taken to remove, as far as possible, all causes of excitement; for if the people continuously remain subject to repeated excitements, their old habits will become more firmly rooted and even the responsibility of government will not be able to remove them. In order to remove such excitements as result from political differences the following steps must, in my opinion, be adopted:—

(1) The India Office should make a point of thoroughly acquainting the British people with the fact that although mixed electorate is the best means of the advancement of a country, yet the special conditions prevailing in India make the introduction of communal representation an unavoidable necessity; and that the introduction of this system is not an error which must be rectified, but that it lies in the hands of the majorities themselves to remove by their fair dealings the misgivings of the minorities and to reconcile them to a mixed electorate, and that then, and not till then, can this system be changed.

To change the law of separate electorate under the present conditions will not help to promote the peace of the country. The state of things now prevailing in India is that Muslims are kept out of every department. They have not yet got even half of the number of posts to which they are entitled by reason of their numbers. And this is telling on their commerce and industry also. They were backward in commerce even before the advent of the British, because there was Muslim

rule in India, and the Muslims naturally took more interest in Government service and it was on this occupation that their living mostly depended. Hence, they stand in greater need of Government service for the maintenance of their lives than any other community. But this department, too, is to a great extent closed upon them. Under these circumstances it is but natural that suspicions and misgivings should arise in their minds, and until these misgivings and suspicions are removed, mixed electorate can be of no good in this country. The Muslims naturally fear that when their rights are trampled upon in small things, they will not be respected in great things.

(2) It should be definitely and conclusively settled that until three-fourths of the elected members of the community which is affected by the system of mixed electorate agree in the Assembly to the abolition of communal representation, and until the elected members vote for it thrice in three successive terms of the Assembly, the system of mixed electorates shall not be adopted in India. For the enforcement of this law in the various provinces, it shall be necessary that three-fourths of the elected representatives of the communities concerned in the provincial councils should vote also in favour of the adoption of this system in their respective provinces. It should be ruled and included in the Constitutional Law for India that the system of communal representation shall not be changed by a mere majority of votes. Unless this is done, the suspicions of the Muslims and some of the other minor communities can never be removed and peace can never be established in the country.

(3) It should also be ruled and included in the Constitutional Law of the Indian Government that no such law as affects a particular community shall be passed and enforced unless three-fourths of the representatives in the community in the Assembly vote for it in three successive terms of the Assembly and unless the elected members of the community affected do not agree by a three-fourths majority to enforce it in their province. The misgiving of the Muslims with regard to the law of not enforcing any bill affecting a community until three-fourths of its elected members agree to it are very weighty and are a great hindrance in the way of peace, for we see that some persons who were formerly in favour of this law are now against it. The Muslims fear that this law will some day be

changed by a majority of votes and it will become impossible for them to safeguard their rights.

(4) Ever since the question of reforms has come to the fore I have been pointing out (and I am still of the same opinion) that the basis on which representation has been allotted to different communities in different provinces are quite erroneous according to the present arrangement. Although the Muslims have been given more seats in the Councils of Bombay, Madras, U.P., C.P., and Behar, than they were entitled to on the basis of their number, yet at the same time their majority both in Bengal and the Punjab has been changed into a minority. The result is that in no Council are the Muslim members in the majority. They are not thankful for the advantage that has been allowed to them in certain provinces, for in spite of that advantage they still form a minority in those Councils, but in the Councils, where their majority has been turned into a minority they are dissatisfied, and I think their dissatisfaction is quite justified. But the Indian leaders and the Government have erred in this matter, for before arriving at this decision they lost sight of the delicacy of the question. I have been saying from the very outset that as a rule the representation of each community should be proportionate to its numerical strength, and if a greater representation is given to any community out of consideration of its importance and out of regard for the fact that a representation proportionate to its numbers shall not suffice to represent its varied interests, care should be taken not to turn the majority of some other communities into a minority. I think the non-observance of this rule has caused a good deal of tension between the Hindus and the Muslims, although they themselves are equally responsible for it with the Government. I have been speaking and writing against it from the very beginning, but I am sorry to say that my warning was not heeded, though now many of the Muslim leaders have begun to realise the consequences and admit their mistake.

With regard to the disputes which arise in connection with the observance of social and religious ceremonies, it is also necessary to decide upon a definite policy. In my opinion, the feeling that one community has a right to prevent another community from the performance of its social and religious ceremonies is highly injurious to the peace of the country.

Peace can never be maintained by preventing others from acts which we ourselves dislike. On the other hand, real peace can be established only when every man is allowed full liberty of action with regard to all those religious and social rites and ceremonies which involve no actual harm to other communities or which are not indecent and repugnant to the nature of man. It is necessary, however, that due regard should be had of the susceptibilities of other communities, which should not be offended unnecessarily. Under this principle, the Muslims should not be prevented from the slaughter of cows. But as their slaughter causes pain to the Hindus, it should not be permitted in public places or at such places as are exposed to the view of the Hindus. It should, however, be allowed in slaughter-houses or in private houses (where there are no municipalities), or in the fields, in the case of the Zamindars.

Similarly, it is not proper to take out cows decorated so that it may be known that they are being taken out for slaughter. The Muslims should themselves desist from it, otherwise, the Government should interfere and prevent them from such acts. Islam does not enjoin to make a display of the slaughter-animals. The Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) ordered a display of the slaughter-animals only once, but it was not done to injure the feelings of any people. On the other hand, it was done from a desire to please others, for, on that occasion, an Arab chief was coming to pay him a visit, and he was a man who loved the sacrifice of animals, so the Holy Prophet ordered that the animals of sacrifice should be paraded before him so that he might know that the Muslims agreed with him in this respect. This example, however, cannot be taken advantage of in these days, for in India the Muslims have to deal with a people who abhor the slaughter of animals in general, and the slaughter of cows in particular. Hence, in my opinion, in order to maintain public peace, it is necessary that the Muslims should be prevented from displays of this kind. They have, indeed, a right to slaughter or sacrifice cows, but they have no right to tease a community which abhors their slaughter by making a display of their action before their eyes.

Again, according to the principles above enunciated by me, just as the Muslims should have perfect liberty to slaughter

cows, similarly the Christians and the followers of other religions should have complete freedom to slaughter swine, and likewise the Sikhs should be free to perform "Jhatka," for as long as all the communities living in India will not cease to unjustly interfere with one another's actions, and as long as they will not be made to give up this practice, the spirit of true toleration will not be engendered in them and peace will not be established.

As regards the question of Music before Mosques, I think peace may be maintained by the observance of the same principle in this case also. In my opinion, as the Muslims do not look upon music as an evil practice as the Hindus look upon the slaughter of cows, therefore its practice in public cannot be stopped. Yet at a time when service is actually going on in a Mosque, it is advisable to stop music within such distance of the moques where it is likely to interfere with their prayers. But at a time when no service is going on, the Muslims seem to have no right to hinder another community from the performance of a religious or social act at a public place, for that means interference with their liberty. Such buildings, however, as are meant for musical performances must, in my opinion, not be allowed to be constructed near mosques, for it will be a constant source of interference.

Again, this privilege should not be confined to the Muslims but must be extended to the Hindus, Christians, and other communities as well, and music and processions playing music or making noises should not be allowed to pass near their respective places of worship when they are actually engaged in service.

I think it is also utterly unreasonable on the part of both Muslims and Hindus to interfere with each other's religious festivals. If one community is rejoi ing at a time when another is mourning, nobody has any right to object. In the case of individuals also we see every day that if there is mourning in one house, there is rejoicing in another house, and nobody who is himself engaged in mourning goes about in the city prohibiting others from rejoicing. When both the communities admit the existence of differences between them, there is no reason why they should be angry with each other when there is a difference in their practice.

In short, in order to create an atmosphere of toleration in the country, it is necessary that one community should be prevented from interfering in the affairs of another community, and all must have perfect freedom in social and religious matters. The only check on their conduct should be that one community should not go out of its way to cause annoyance to another community.

There is no doubt that the adoption of this course will, in the beginning, cause some excitement among the people, but there is equally no doubt that until this course is adopted the spirit of living at peace with one another shall not be engendered in the different communities. As long as the Government continues to check one community from the exercise of its due rights, merely because there is excitement in another community, the impression will continue among the people that by stirring up agitation they can deprive other communities of their liberty and freedom, and under this impression they will never cease to agitate. The present condition of India is like that of a patient whom the physician confines to bed lest he should catch cold through exposure, but continued confinement taking away his power of resistance, he finds himself chill and cold at every mild breeze or puff of wind.

In the early stage of the riots, I offered to the Indian leaders the advice that besides taking steps to put an end to these riots, they should also see to it that whenever there was a riot, it should be localised. The practice heretofore has been that whenever there occurs a riot, both the parties begin to publish utterly false and highly exaggerated accounts, and the result is that people living in other cities become excited and the disturbances become widespread. Moreover, every community, without ascertaining the true facts, begins to defend its own members, which only aggravates the trouble. In order to remedy these evils, the course followed by the Congress was that they appointed a commission of enquiry to investigate the matter on the spot. After the riots, however, the people are much excited, and therefore they do not trust the members of the commission. Besides, the investigations carried on by these commissions are very tardy, and therefore they cannot prevent the spreading of disorders to other parts of the country. My proposal, therefore, was that a permanent board should be set

up in every province in consultation with the public, and all communities that have an independent existence should be equally represented on it. Whenever there is a disturbance, a committee consisting of four persons should at once be formed, comprising two members of the provincial board representing the two communities concerned in the riots, one member representing a third community, and the fourth a Government official. These four persons should enquire into and report as soon as possible on the causes of riots and determine which party is guilty of aggression and consequently responsible for the disturbance. One moral effect of such procedure would be that the different communities will begin to feel the necessity of safeguarding their reputation. Besides, no community shall unjustly defend the aggressive party. The Government should also, while punishing the rioters, remember which party was really to blame. The riots can never be stopped until this fact is taken into consideration at the time of meting out punishment to the offenders.

It may be asked: What has the Government to do with this matter? But I think the Government would be well advised if they co-operated with the public in these matters. Such co-operation will have the advantage of safeguarding the Government from the unjust criticism that is sometimes levelled at it by independent commissions of enquiry. The participation of the Government in such investigations should, however, be only semi-official. These commissions of enquiry, too, should remember that their real aim is not to bring about a reconciliation, but to find out the real cause of the disturbances, and to affix the responsibility; for many proposals of reconciliation only tend to lengthen the disputes. There will be no harm, however, if an attempt is made to bring about a reconciliation after the committee has completed its enquiries and made its report.

Having dealt with political and social differences, I now turn to religious disputes. In my opinion, it is the religious differences that are really at the root of all disturbances. In India these differences are made use of even by those who have no concern with religion but who, understanding the real character of the Indian people, know full well that in order to lead and control the masses, it is necessary to act under the

cloak of religion. The present riots, too, may be traced to that very source, *viz.*, religious animosity. The political leaders of India have come to realise that India can never attain to complete independence unless a religious concord is brought about among the people of this country. Hence, in order to attain this end, the first course they adopted was to interest themselves in questions exclusively Muslim. They thought that by their identifying themselves with the Muslims in such matters, they would be able to efface from their mind the consciousness of a separate existence. But unfortunately (or may I say fortunately) the questions which they chose as objects for their sympathy were such that the more the Muslims engrossed themselves in them, the further were they removed from India and their attention was drawn all the more closely to the other Muslim countries, and their consciousness of a separate existence, instead of being obliterated, was only strengthened. It is true that the Muslims did make sacrifice to attain "Swaraj" and they did put themselves to a good deal of trouble, but instead of looking upon themselves as mere Indians they began to regard themselves as part and parcel of the Muslim world even more than before. Seeing this, those who had made the Muslims as their tool and who wished to secure "Swaraj" at the expense of the Muslims adopted a new course. They decided to obliterate the very name of Muslims from India, and in order to attain this purpose they adopted two means. On the one hand, they tried to check the progress of Islam by making the untouchables join their ranks; and on the other, they tried to diminish the number of Muslims by starting a proselytising campaign. As this attack was, for the greater part, opposed by the community, of which I have the honour to be the Head, therefore I know in detail the regrettable ways which they adopted to achieve this end, but as my object here is to suggest to Your Excellency the means of bringing about peace between the two communities, I avoid those details.

In short, they launched a two-sided attack against the Muslims, but this attack could not succeed unless the sympathies of the Hindu people were enlisted. The Hindu community, however, could not be easily persuaded to admit the untouchables into their ranks and to countenance the "Shudhi" movement, for by adopting such movements they had

to renounce their practice of thousands of years. Hence, in order to enlist the sympathies of the whole Hindu nation, it was decided to stir up a general war between the Hindus and the Muslims, so that when the feelings of the former had been bitterly excited against the latter, they should be told that they could not maintain their independent existence until they admitted the untouchables into their ranks and were prepared to absorb the Muslims, too, among them. To attain this end, the most shameful and highly inflammatory pamphlets and books were written against Islam, and they were designated by such names as "God of the Mussalmans," "The Prophet of the Muslims," and so on. These pamphlets were circulated broadcast both among the Muslims and the Hindus. Similarly, efforts were made to inflame the Muslims through Press, pulpit, and platform. The result was that the passions of both the communities were set aflame. The Muslims, too, left no stone unturned to pay their defamers in the same coin. The tempers of both parties being highly excited, riots were sure to follow. If before that there were stray and spasmodic cases, they now developed into an everyday fracas. Hundreds were killed and thousands were wounded, but those who were the real instigators of these outbursts were not only safe but they also achieved their object. They succeeded in securing the sympathy of the Hindu people. But the path on which they have been treading will not lead them to their goal. The peace of the country will indeed be ruined, but that sort of religious unity which they are seeking and which, after the experience of thousands of years, they believe to be the only means of union, can never be attained in India. The only result will be that the attainment of "Swaraj," instead of being expedited will only be delayed.

In my opinion, had the law relating to the Press and to public speeches been founded on a sound basis, these people would never have succeeded in destroying the peace of the country, and the two communities would never have been driven to such frenzy to which they are now driven. There are several defects in this law which ought to be removed, and there are many omissions which must be supplied.

In the year 1923 I drew the attention of Sir Edward Maclagan, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., the then Governor of the Punjab,

to the fact that unless a law was passed requiring the confiscation of offensive writings, there would be no peace. I regret to say that the Government of Sir Edward Maclagan at that time contented themselves with the answer that it was a matter which concerned the Government of India, while my object in making the suggestion to the Punjab Government was that they should draw the attention of the Government of India to that matter, for they could do it more effectively than I could; but the Punjab Government did not accept my suggestion, and under the circumstances, I also did not think it proper to address the Government of India on that matter. I am, however, glad to see that now a change has been made in the law, though it is a matter for regret that the change has been made rather late in the day, and in the meanwhile writings have been published, both by the Hindus and the Muslims, which are responsible for the lamentable riots that have recently occurred in India, and this position will yet continue to act on the minds and brains of the Indians for a long time to come.

But in spite of this change, the present law and the method of its enforcement leave much room for improvement, and I once more acquit myself of my duty by drawing Your Excellency's attention to its defectiveness. I think the following are the defects in the law which require to be removed and in the presence of which the law cannot maintain peace in the country.

The first remedy which I suggest in connection with this law is that the public itself should have power to sue an offending author or lecturer. In the present law, only the Government has power to institute legal proceedings against the offenders. The officials appointed by the Government for this purpose are, after all, human beings. Some writings which are highly inflammatory escape their notice. Sometimes, from their own point of view, they do not look upon a writing to be objectionable, while it is really inflammatory. For instance, a Hindu official, on reading the writing of a Hindu writer, or a Muslim official on reading the writing of a Muslim writer, may, without being intentionally guilty of any dishonesty, think it to be inoffensive, for his feelings run counter to those of the offended party. Similarly, it cannot be denied that sometimes both Hindu and Muslim officials intentionally overlook the writings

of their co-religionists and make exaggerated reports about the writings of the other party. The result is that the public always labours under the misunderstanding that the Government favours certain parties, and as certain writings which the people look upon as inflammatory are not confiscated and no action is taken against them, the wrath of the public continues to increase and they wait for the time when they may be able to avenge themselves on the offenders with their own hands, and this leads to disturbances. It is strange that a son is entitled to sue the man who makes an attack on his father, but the followers of Prophets whom they love more than even their parents and an attack on whom excites them more than an attack on their fathers, are not allowed to sue such men as abuse their prophets and the holy founders of their religious movements. If the object of this law is to check disturbances and breaches of the peace, the followers of different religions should have power to institute legal proceedings against such persons as have been guilty of calumniating their prophets or their religion. If this defect in the law is removed, a great check will be put on offences of this class.

Under the existing state of things, it cannot be denied that the officials do sometimes ignore offences or favour certain parties, and hence, in spite of this law, disturbances cannot be stopped. I have seen that as the power of instituting legal proceedings against such offenders is vested in the Government only, the communities that are in the minority suffer in particular. My own experience is that most abusive and inflammatory articles are published against the Ahmadiyya Community and the Holy Founder of their Movement, and we have often drawn to them the attention of the various Provincial Governments in whose jurisdiction such offences are committed and of the Government of India, but, with one or two solitary exceptions, the Governments have never paid heed to our representations. The reason of this lies in the fact that the officials employed in this department have no sympathy for us. The result is that in the minds of the members of this community, which is more loyal than any other community in India, the impression is taking root more and more firmly every day that true loyalty has no value in the eyes of the Government, and that it is the numbers of a community that weigh

with it. If the public had power to seek redress in the courts of law and have the offenders brought to book, this feeling would have never risen in their minds, and certainly it is highly injurious to the interests of the Government that loyal communities should come to entertain the idea that the Government, because of their loyalty, cares little for their troubles and that it listens more to the agitators for fear of their agitation.

This change will indeed be attended with certain disadvantages; for instance, in order to harass a writer, people of different localities will sue him or proceedings will be instituted against him without any justification. This defect may, however, be remedied by legislation. In my opinion this defect may be removed by the adoption of the following safeguards:—

Firstly, the magistrate should be empowered to make a preliminary inquiry into the matters without summoning the defendant, and if he finds out that there are no sufficient grounds for the complaints, he should dismiss the case.

Secondly, prosecution should be allowed only in the districts in which the writing has been published or the speech has been delivered.

Thirdly, the writer or the speaker should not be allowed to be prosecuted for the same offence more than once. If more than one person prosecute a writer or a speaker for the same writing or speech, they may be made joint complainants in a common suit.

Fourthly, the complaints must be from among the followers of the sacred personage who is alleged to have been calumniated.

Fifthly, only those writers or speakers should be allowed to be prosecuted who are alleged to have committed a libel against the founder of a religious movement.

Sixthly, proceedings should be allowed only in cases in which the Government has taken no action, nor does it intend to take any action. The magistrate should before proceeding with the case inquire from the Government whether or not it intends to take any action against the offender, and should allow prosecution only if the Government does not intend to take any action.

I believe, if the course suggested above is adopted, much of the excitement will be allayed, nor will there be any chance

to make a misuse of the law. But if it is found that, in spite of these safeguards, certain defects still remain, the Government may find means to remedy these also. At any rate, there is no doubt that to limit the power to the Government often affords the public occasion to entertain suspicions about the Government, and mutual ill-will continues to increase. Hence it is imperative that something should be done to remove this defect.

The second reform in the present law which demands urgent attention is that if some one reproduces an objectionable article, he should not be prosecuted until the original offender is prosecuted, provided the original was published in India. We now see that an article appears in one part of India and the Government takes no action against it. But if somebody reproduces the same in another part of India, very strong action is taken against those responsible for the reproduction. This causes much resentment among the people and gives rise to suspicions about the motives of the Government. To illustrate this: A Lucknow paper published an article dealing with the subject that the fatherless birth of Jesus Christ was capable of a natural explanation and that there was nothing supernatural about it. The Government took no action against the Lucknow paper. But when the same article was reproduced in our paper, the "Badr," the Punjab Government at once ordered the paper to deposit a security of 1,500 rupees, and stopped its publication until the payment of the security money. This procedure could make no other impression on the minds of the Ahmadiyya public than this, that the Government was partial and that it was afraid to take any action against the original paper and so it had avenged itself on the second paper.

Indeed, the Government defends itself on the plea that one writing may cause little excitement in one part of the country while the same writing may inflame the people in another part. This argument, however, is very weak, for, firstly, the circulation of the Indian papers is not now confined to any one part of India, and that they reach other parts as well and, secondly, the effect which this difference in the action of the Government produces is harmful. What I mean to say is that legal proceedings should be instituted against a person who reproduces an objectionable article only when such proceedings have already been instituted against the original offender, otherwise

such procedure, far from allaying excitement, will only add fuel to the fire and the Government will be blamed for nothing and any Government desirous of permanency should be chary of incurring the displeasure of the people for no reason.

In addition to the omissions pointed out above in the form of the law, there are also certain defects in the way of its enforcement, and until these defects are removed, the law will not prove as great a help to the maintenance of peace as it otherwise should.

It is evident that the object of the law is to maintain peace in the country, and the present condition of the people of India is such that the conditions prevailing in one province of India cannot fail to affect the other provinces. The Shudhi movement which commenced in the U.P. affected the whole of India, and similarly the riots at Multan and Calcutta affected all parts of India. How then is it possible that the writings appearing in one province should not affect the rest of India? Hence, this law can be effective only if it is uniformly enforced throughout India. Our past experience shows that its enforcement has not been uniform. The law is enforced most of all in the Punjab and is very rarely brought into operation in the U.P. The present disturbances began in this way. Some persons published highly inflammatory tracts in the U.P. and then brought those tracts to the Punjab where they caused excitement. The Punjab Government took action against the writings published in the Punjab as a result of the literature imported from U.P., while the U.P. Government took no action against the writings, published in that province. The result was that in spite of the utmost efforts of the Punjab Government the riots could not be checked. Hence it is necessary that there should be co-operation between the different provinces. Up to this time the Government has entirely ignored the fact that it is the reading of inflammatory books and papers, and not the place of their publication, that causes disturbances. Hence, in order to make this law useful, it is necessary that it should be uniformly enforced throughout India and this, in my opinion, can be effected by adopting the following course:—

Firstly, the Government of India should prepare certain directions which it should issue to the provincial Governments for their guidance, and in these directions it should be pointed

out that action must be taken against the writing of such and such nature even if there is no fear of any breach of the peace in the province itself, for it must be remembered that the effect of a writing is not due to the situation of the press in which it is printed but is due to its circulation and that the circulation of a writing cannot be confined to any one province. Secondly, the Government of India should establish a department at its headquarters where each provincial Government should send copies of those books, newspapers and leaflets against which it has taken some action, and on receiving this information, the Government should inform all the provincial Governments of the action that has been taken against those writings, and if the original local Government had ordered the confiscation of any writing, it should also be prohibited in other provinces.

The second function of this department should be that through it the various Provincial Governments should inform the other Governments that such and such writings published within their jurisdiction are likely to cause breach of the peace and that proper steps should be taken against them.

The third function of this department will be that if any local Government has not taken action against an objectionable writing, the public should be allowed to send that writing to this department and this department should, if it thinks necessary, draw to it the attention of the Government of India, and should, if it thinks advisable, move the local Government under whose jurisdiction the writing in question was originally published, to take the necessary action against it so that public excitement may be allayed.

The fourth function of this department should be to see, in the light of the information furnished to it by the different governments, that the law is being uniformly enforced in all parts of India.

I think it will require no great expense to establish such an office. A few officials may be attached to the Home Member's office to carry on this work. This arrangement will establish co-operation between different governments in the absence of which usefulness of the law has become very limited.

Another matter which must not be lost sight of in connection with the enforcement of this law is that the real object of this law is to maintain peace, and there is no doubt that certain

writings are published at a time when the public is too much engrossed with other affairs to take notice of them, or the writings draw very little attention, and sometimes it is rather injurious than beneficial to take any action against such writings. Hence, the local Governments forbear to take any action on any such writing on such occasions. I quite agree with this policy of the Government, for at such times to take action is more harmful than to take no action, for it only serves to draw the attention of the people to a matter which would have otherwise escaped their notice. But there is one defect in this policy which needs rectification. It sometimes happens that the Government errs in its judgment, and the book on which the Government looks upon as harmless on account of its unimportance or by reason of its having drawn little attention, gradually draws to it the attention of the public and it gives rise to a contention between two parties. When both the parties become excited, the Government tries to allay the excitement by taking action against new publications. The result is that those against whom action is taken accuse the Government of partiality, and as they are unaware of the reason for which the Government had forborne to take action against the previous writings, they look upon themselves as justified in holding such a view about the Government. In order to remove this defect, I submit the following proposal :—

On such occasions, the Government, instead of taking any action against any writing, should issue a warning, telling the public that for some time past there have been appearing certain writings or there have been made some speeches which the Government thinks to be harmful to the public peace, and that the Government had hitherto abstained from taking any action against them, hoping that this movement will subside of itself, but the Government regrets to see that the evil is growing day by day, hence the public is hereby informed that if this state of things is not mended, the Government will be compelled to take legal action against the offenders. After this warning has been issued, the Government should take proper steps against such persons as publish objectionable writings or make inflammatory speeches, even after the warning. But as regards objectionable writings, the Government may, if it thinks proper, confiscate them even if they belong to the period when the

Government had assumed an attitude of indifference to such writings.

Another defect which requires to be removed is that sometimes the Government takes action against a certain writing, but does not inform the public of it. Thus the party against which the writing was published remains unconciliated and the Government is blamed. I think, with the exception of such papers or writers whose general conduct has been unobjectionable, the Government should inform the public of the action which it has taken against the offending persons or newspapers so that the party whose feelings had been injured may be conciliated.

In connection with the enforcement of the law, I think it is also advisable that if those writers whose writings have been confiscated should make an apology, they should be pardoned, for the real aim of the law is to maintain peace and not to punish. Such a course will not only conciliate those against whom the offence had been committed, but it will also soothe that community, of which the writer was a member, and thus the danger of any breach of the peace between the two communities will be averted.

Again, in connection with the enforcement of the law, there is a very important matter which must be taken into consideration. Firstly, it must be seen whether the writing against which action is being taken is not a reply to any inflammatory writing against which the Government had failed to take any action, for if such be the case the Government shares the responsibility equally with the accused, for he had to give vent to the excited feelings of his community owing to the inaction of the Government.

Secondly, it must be considered whether the writer confines himself to replying or he makes a new attack on the other party.

There is no doubt that conditions now prevailing in India are such that people cannot bear to hear any offensive word with regard to their religion. Therefore, if one party has offended another party, and the Government has taken no action against the offending party, it is only natural to expect that the wronged party will repel the attack of the aggressor, and then the Government should bear in mind that it shares the blame equally with the replying party.

The above are the suggestions which, if adopted, are

calculated to protect the country from the evil effects of inflammatory writings and speeches. But the best course to be adopted is that which the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi (may peace and blessings of God be upon him), pointed out to the Government 27 years ago. He moved the Government to adopt means which cut at the very root of this evil. The real thing is that it is very difficult for a writer to judge for himself whether his writing is calculated to excite the feelings of the other party, for the means which should help him in making a correct judgment about his matter are entirely non-existent and he stands in need of a guide. Very often it is after the publication of his book that he realises the effects which his writing was capable of producing. As long ago as the year 1899, Ahmad of Qadian (may peace be with him) made three proposals, the adopting of any one of which supplies the solution of the difficulty and leads to the establishment of peace and order in the country. I also have been laying these proposals before the Government, and now I do so once more. The proposals are as follows:—

1. It should be enacted that nobody should attack any other religion, but should confine himself to the expounding of the beauties of his own religion.

2. Failing this, the law should be so modified as to disallow such attack on other religions to which the principle of one's own religion are equally exposed. For, if one attacks such principles as form part of one's own religion, it shows that his object in attacking a religion is no other than to create mischief and inflame the feelings of the other party and ridicule his religion.

3. If the Government should not be able to adopt this proposal also, it should, after consultation with the members of different religions, draw up a list of their authentic books and then it should prohibit such attacks on religions as are based on books not included in the list. By this many causes of dispute will be removed because excitement of feelings is mostly due to the fact that objections are based not on authentic books but on books of tales and legends which are not recognised as reliable by the followers of a religion.

I have taken the liberty of making an encroachment on

Your Excellency's valuable time, but I trust that since this letter has been written with a sincere heart, Your Excellency will also be pleased to go carefully through it and order an early adoption of such of the proposals as Your Excellency may find useful, so that the excitement which now prevails among the various communities may, to some extent, be suppressed, and the Government and other wellwishers of the country may have an opportunity to work that change in the temper of the people without which, as I have already said, there can be no lasting peace in India. I, myself, and my Community, are prepared to co-operate with Your Excellency's Government in this matter, and if Your Excellency desire a greater elucidation of any of the points mentioned in the letter, I should be glad to do so.

I conclude this letter with the prayer that God may, out of His mercy, bring about peace in the land and enable India to take a prominent part in the efforts to bring about peace in the world. I also pray that He may reveal to Your Excellency and Your Excellency's colleagues the true means for the maintenance of peace.

And our last prayer is, that all praise is due to Allah the Lord of the Worlds.

THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT.

ITS RISE AND PROGRESS.

The foundation of the Ahmadiyya Movement was laid by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1836-1908), on whom be peace and blessings of God, in March 1889, when he was about 54 years of age. Ahmad (on whom be peace) belonged to a noble and ancient Moghul family of the Punjab which had come over to India from Samarkand in or about the reign of Babar. The Headquarters of the Movement were established by Ahmad at Qadian.

At the present moment the movement has spread to almost all parts of the world and its members number over half a million, the majority of whom are to be found in India and the Countries adjacent to it. People of all ranks and classes *i.e.*, those belonging to higher castes as well as those belonging to the so-called low castes have joined the Movement.

Outside India the members of the movement are to be found in Ceylon, Burma, the Malay States and the Straits Settlement. Two papers in Malay and English languages are issued by the members of the Ahmadiyya Community in Ceylon and one English paper by those in Burma. Several people in the Philippines and Sumatra have also joined the movement. A mission has recently been established in Sumatra where a Community has been formed.

Of the countries in the North and West of Asia members of the movement are to be found in Bokhara, Persia, Mesopotamia, the Vilayat of Mosul, Arabia and Syria. Two of our missionaries are at present working in Damascas and Tehran where they have secured a goodly number of adherents.

In Africa regular communities have been formed in Egypt, Zanzibar, Natal, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast, Nigeria and Morocco and also in the island of Mauritius. A paper in the French language is issued by the Movement from Mauritius.

In Europe the movement has so far found adherent in

England, France, Holland and Austria. The England Mission was established about twelve years ago. Its latest achievement is the opening of a mosque in London.

In America a mission was established only 5 years ago and in the United States the members of the movement already exceed fifteen hundred. The movement has also spread to Trinidad, Brazil and Costa Rica in South America.

Australia also shares in this great blessing and relying on the Word of God, we firmly believe that the rest of the world, before it is many days older, will also participate in the blessing.

CLAIMS AND TEACHINGS.

Ahmad claimed to be the Messiah for the Christians, the Mahdi for the Muslims, Krishna or the Neha Kalank Avatar for the Hindus and Mesio Darbahami for the Zoroastrians. In short, he was the promised Prophet of every nation and was appointed to collect all mankind under the banner of one religion. In him were centred the hopes and expectations of all nations; he is the Dome of Peace under which every nation can worship its Maker; he is the aperture through which all nations can have a vision of their Lord; and he is the centre at which all the radii of the circle can join. It is ordained therefore, that the world should find peace and rest only through him. The object of the advent of the Holy Founder of the movement may be explained in his own words. He says :—" The task for which God has appointed me is that I should, by removing the obstacles which have been set up between man and his Maker, re-establish in the hearts of men love and devotion towards God, and by making manifest the Truth, should put an end to all religious wars and strife and then lay the foundation of abiding peace; and should discover to the world the spiritual truth which it has lost sight of, and should demonstrate to the world the true spiritual life which had been displaced by material desires and should in my own life manifest those Divine powers with which man is endowed but which can be manifested only through prayer and devotion, and above all, that I should permanently re-establish that bright and pure unity of God, which is free from every kind of association of partners with God and which had entirely disappeared

from the heart of mankind." (Lecture on Islam, p. 34). Again, " God has endowed me with knowledge, that I should warn those who have gone astray and should lead those who dwell in darkness into the light." " God has sent me to reform this sad plight and to lead mankind back to His pure unity. Accordingly I have explained all things to you. I have also been sent to give to the world a firmer faith and to demonstrate to the world the existence of God, for faith has withered and life to come has become a mere fable and the conduct of mankind shows that their whole trust is placed in the world and in things material and that they have no faith in God or the life to come. They talk of God and of spirituality but their hearts are filled with the love of the world. Jesus (on whom be peace) had found the Jews in the same state in which I find the world to-day and just as lack of faith had driven the love of God from the hearts of the Jews and had destroyed their morals, the world has to-day ceased to love God and I have been sent to revive the love and fear of God in the heart of mankind and this alone is the object of my existence. God has informed me that the Heaven shall again draw nigh to the earth after it had drawn away. So I have come to renew these things and have been sent for this purpose (Ketabul Bariyya, pp. 253-256.) Again he says that he has been sent to attract men " to the Truth in all things relating to belief, morals, knowledge and conduct in such a manner that they should give special strength in all these matters." (Review of Religions, Vol. I. p. 3). Again he says that it is his duty, first, " to demonstrate the truth of Islam to all nations," secondly, " to present to the world the true and unalloyed teachings of Islam, which are replete with truth and spirituality, free from all false interpretations and irrelevant interpolations" and thirdly, "to bestow the light of faith on all those who are eager in its search from among the nations of the world."

In the foregoing paragraph an attempt has been made to give a bare outline of the claims and teachings of the Holy Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement by random quotations from his writings. He has left a voluminous literature behind him which is a perennial source of joy and inspiration to all earnest seekers of Truth. For fuller information a reference is invited to his books which are about ninety in number.

THE MESSAGE OF PEACE.

Ahmad (peace be on him) was a Messenger of Peace. He condemned intolerance of the views of others however much they were opposed to one's cherished openions. He was one of the earliest advocates of Hindu-Muslim unity and he strove hard to bring about a rapprochement between the two great communities of India. The last bit of writing done by him while he was in his last illness was a paper on Hindu-Moslem Unity named "The Message of Peace". It was intended to be read at Lahore on 31st May, 1908 but his death prevented this arrangement and it was read on the 21st June at the University Hall, Lahore, in a gathering of over 5000 men including most of the leaders of Hindu and Mohamedan societies. Mr. Justice P. C. Chatterjee was in the chair. A few extracts from the paper are given below :—

"My beloved countrymen, all of us, whether we are Hindus or Mussalmans, are, notwithstanding hundreds of differences, at one in believing in a God Who is the Creator and Lord of the world. Moreover, we have a common cause, not only because we are all human beings, but also because being denizens of one and the same country we are truly as neighbours to one another. It is therefore meet that we should live as true and sincere friends and sincerely sympathise with one another in temporal as well as religious difficulties so that we may be as parts of one whole or members of one body."

"My dear countrymen, that religion does not deserve the name of religion, which does not inculcate broad sympathy with humanity in general, nor does that person deserve to be called a human being who has not a sympathetic soul within him. Our God has not made any invidious distinction between different peoples and He is not unjust to any. The powers and faculties which He gave to the ancient people of India was also granted to the Arabs, the Persians, the Syrians, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Europeans and the Americans. For all, the earth of God serves alike as a floor and for the sake of all, the sun, the moon and the stars give their light and perform such other functions as God has charged them with. All people alike derive benefit from air, water, fire, earth and other things

created by God and all equally use the produce of the earth, its corns and its herbs, its flowers and its fruits. These are the broad Divine morals which give us a lesson that we should also do good to all our fellow beings and should not have contracted views and narrow sympathy. My friends, know it for certain that whichever of us two peoples shall not revere the Divine morals and shall make its national character opposed to other high and pure morals shall soon be destroyed and not only shall that generation suffer alone but even the children of that people shall suffer the evil consequences. Since the world was created, the righteous of all countries have borne testimony that there is water of life in the Divine morals and that the physical life of man depends on his imitating the Divine morals which are the fountain-head of peace and safety."

"Everybody knows that union can remove difficulties which it is hard to remove otherwise. It therefore behoves the wise man that he should seek the blessing of union. The Hindus and the Mussalmans are two peoples living in this country about whom it is impossible to conceive that the one can at any time by the use of force expel the other from its home. On the other hand, the ties which unite them are so strong that it is impossible to cut them asunder now. If one of these two nations is visited by any general destruction, the other cannot stand aloof and witness the scene but must suffer with its neighbour. If one of these two nations will try to bring the other into contempt with disdain and pride, it shall itself be branded with the same contempt. And if one of them does not sympathise with the other it shall also suffer the evil consequences. If a person belonging to one of these nations does anything to bring destruction upon the other, he is like the person who cuts the branch upon which he is himself sitting. My friends, you are all educated, and it is time that you should purge your hearts of enmity and hatred and advance in harmony and friendliness. The progress that you have made should serve to awaken your sympathy for your countrymen and neighbours. The difficulties one meets with in this world may be compared to a great desert which one has to pass through at a time when the heat of the sun is scorching and to allay the heat and quench the thirst on this perilous journey is needed the cold water of union and harmony."

"The idea of limiting Divine revelation to one's own language is based upon ignorance and strong prejudice against others. In early times it was very seldom that one people knew much about another or one country was acquainted with the conditions prevailing in another and the natural outcome of the limited means of intercourse and intercommunication was that whenever a Prophet appeared among a people and a book was given them for their guidance, they thought that they were the only recipients of Divine revelation in the world and that true guidance was only given to them. This belief has been the source of great many evils and strong prejudice against the religious books and religious leaders of other people and ultimately developed into the severest hatred and enmity. * * * * When the followers of one religion are ignorant of the religions prevailing in other countries, it followed as a natural consequence that every community depended on its own book and its own creed as the sole repository of truth. The result of this dependence was that when the inhabitants of different countries began to have intercourse with one another, each found it difficult to approve of the alien creeds. Fancy had invested every religion with certain peculiarities and excellences and it was no easy task to divest it of the imaginary excellences which it was supposed to possess. Consequently the adherents of every religion gave themselves up to the refutation of the rival religions."

"Need I tell you what must be the outcome of insulting and reviling those holy Prophets whom millions of men from all ranks of society hold in high reverence and whom they think it a pride to follow? There is no community but must have more or less tasted the fruits of this. Dear countrymen, long experience and repeated trials have proved that to speak disrespectfully of the holy leaders of other people and to hurl invectives at them is a poison which not only undermines the body, but also destroys the soul and thus carries a two-fold ruin in its wake. A country cannot enjoy peace when the different races inhabiting it find fault with the religious leaders of one another and two communities cannot live in harmony with each other when one or each of them speaks insultingly of the spiritual guides of the other. One must have one's feelings stirred up when one hears one's Prophet or Leader openly

insulted. Particularly, Mussalmans are a people who without calling their Holy Prophet, God or a son of God, believe him to be greater than all other righteous men that were born of a woman. So it is in no case possible to live on peaceful terms with a true Muslim unless the Holy Prophet Mohammed (peace be on him) is invariably spoken of in respectful terms.

"We, the Mussalmans, on our part, never speak disrespectfully of the Prophets of other people. On the other hand, our belief is that all the other Spiritual Leaders of people who ever lived on this earth, who were accepted as true Prophets by millions of men, who won the respect of a large portion of the human race, and who have been held in esteem for a long period of time, were the true Prophets of God, the above circumstances alone constituting a sufficient evidence of their truth with us. If they had not been sent by God, they would not have found acceptance with millions of men. God never grants to others the honour which He gives to His chosen ones. If an imposter sits on the seat of an elect of God, he is soon brought to naught."

"It is on the basis of this principle that we regard the Vedas as from God and believe the *Rishis* to be holy and sacred personages. * * * The Veda being a book of great antiquity, it is very likely that various additions and alterations were made in it by the Pundits of subsequent generations. That millions of people have been believing it to be the Word of God is however, a sufficient reason of its truth, for it is impossible that the word of an imposter should enjoy the honour which the Vedas have enjoyed."

"If, in order to have complete peace, the Hindu gentlemen and the Arya Samajists are prepared to accept our Holy Prophet (may peace and blessings of God be upon him), I will be the first man to sign an agreement to the effect that we the members of the Ahmadiyya Community, shall always continue to believe in the Vedas and to speak of the Vedas and the *Rishis* in the most respectful terms and bind ourselves to pay to the Hindus a penalty of Rs. 3,00,000 in case we fail to fulfil the agreement. If the Hindus cordially wish for this peace, they should also sign a similar agreement. * * * The Mussalmans that are outside the pale of the Ahmadiyya Movement, have no uniformity in their views and aims ; they recognise no leader whom they think themselves bound to obey. * * * Still I hope when the

Hindus make this compact with me, the other Mussalmans will not be so foolish as to have their Holy Prophet abused by speaking insultingly of the scriptures and the leaders of so good mannered a people. * * * But in order to make the agreement strong and sure, it will be necessary that the agreement should be signed by at least 10,000 intelligent men on both sides."

"Dear countrymen, there is nothing like peace. Let us become one nation and one people by means of this pact. You see how much discord there is in the land and how greatly the country has suffered on account of this mutual recrimination. Come and try even now how great are the blessings of mutual approbation. This is the best means of bringing about a reconciliation. To try to have peace by any other means is like leaving alone a sore which is bright and smooth from outside, but is inwardly full of foul and putrid matter."

Prophetic words these, uttered some 18 years ago and yet how appropriate to the conditions prevailing to-day !

We conclude with praises to God. May He guide us in the right path. Amen.

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